

Build Me an Empire by GateBreaker

Category: Stranger Things (TV 2016)

Genre: Gen, M/M

Language: English

Characters: Billy Hargrove, Demodog, Dustin Henderson, Eleven | Jane Hopper, Jim "Chief" Hopper, Jonathan Byers, Lucas Sinclair, Maxine "Max" Mayfield, Mike Wheeler, Nancy Wheeler, Steve Harrington, Will Byers

Relationships: Billy Hargrove/Steve Harrington, Eleven | Jane Hopper/Mike Wheeler, Jonathan Byers/Nancy Wheeler, Maxine "Max" Mayfield/Lucas Sinclair, Steve Harrington & Dustin Henderson

Status: Completed

Published: 2018-11-13

Updated: 2018-11-14

Packaged: 2022-04-23 03:01:28

Rating: General Audiences

Warnings: No Archive Warnings Apply

Chapters: 3

Words: 3,947

Publisher: archiveofourown.org

Summary:

The light bulb hums and flickers again. Growing brighter. And that is when he sees it. There is something strange on the far wall. It looks almost like a spot of black mold. Only it is throbbing ever so slightly, and, slowly but surely...

Spreading.

1. The Beginnings of a New Tomorrow

Author's Note:

So part of this is something I took from another one of my stories 'Blind Tales'. I just changed a few things and then I had this. Mainly, the reason this even exist is because of chapter three. It was not supposed to turn out like this but it kind of... ran away from me. It's short and nothing that special, it's more of an experiment than anything, but it's also something I wanted to share with you so I hope you like it. ^.^

I may come back to this in the future and make it an actual legit story. I'm not sure. Probably.

Title may also change.

English is not my first language so I apologize for any errors or misspellings.

Since that fateful night, nearly a month ago, Noah has felt as if he's being watched. He *always* feels like something is watching him. Observing. Waiting.

Waiting for what, Noah didn't know, but the constant paranoia and inevitable sense of doom made him jittery, twitchy, skittish.

He couldn't go to sleep. Went as long as he could without, until he finally passed out due to absolute exhaustion into a dreamless sleep. He mostly managed to do so out of sheer spite and pure stubbornness, but that alone couldn't keep him up indefinitely. He drank ridiculous amounts of coffee and energy drinks to help keep him going. He listened to loud music and had the television blaring at all times. For this, Noah was slightly grateful that he didn't have neighbours, even if the thought of no one being able to hear him scream was enough to make him nauseous with trepidation and his heart skip a beat.

As he rounded the corner that lead to his house, nervous and watchful of his surroundings, he suddenly felt it. The sense of eyes burning into the back of his skull. Always watchful. Always persistent.

Noah walked faster.

He didn't know *what* it was, but it wasn't a person. He didn't know what it was, but he was damned sure it wasn't a mere animal either. This one cold fact was enough to make him break out in cold sweat as he finally spotted his house in the distance. Noah was nearly running by this point.

What he did know was that nothing had ever been the same since that night. Since the fateful encounter all those four weeks and three days ago. After that night, after his near meeting with death, Noah had taken his baseball bat - the one he had since he was fourteen and decided he wanted to be a professional baseball player - out of the closet where it was kept due to his inability to deal with the sense of nostalgia it brought alone, and had it propped against the wall near his bed, always within reach. Just in case.

After a week, he added the nails. Just in case, he thought.

Two weeks in, he bought a crossbow. Just in case, he repeated.

At the third week, he considered buying a gun. Just in case, he insisted.

He bought two the next day.

At the forth week mark, Noah was just coming back from looking at some pickaxes. Just in case, he murmured tiredly to himself. Just in case.

It was a Wednesday (because nothing good ever happens on Wednesdays) and the streets and sidewalks were filled with pedestrians moving in tandem. It looked like a bizarre sort of march to the beat of the town's symphony. Noah was almost home. He could practically smell the sweet aroma of the orange tree in his front yard.

Forty meters.

As soon as he was home, Noah thought, he's going to fill the bathtub and take a long, relaxing bath.

Thirty meters.

That would work, Noah thought somewhat hysterically as the burning on the back of his head seemed to somehow intensify the closer he got to his front door, a nice hot bath would be amazing.

He walked faster, trying to keep up appearances and not look like he was seconds away from having a mental breakdown.

Twenty meters.

He was going to turn on every damn light in the house and put the television on max volume. He swore to God, he goddamn would.

Ten meters.

Noah came to a swift and abrupt stop and his breath hitched. There, at the other end of the street. It was there. It wasn't the monster that he saw four weeks ago, but it was one of the dogs, the ones that *turned*. He was sure of it. He *was*. It sat there, lanky and with a dark fur coat. It sat in the middle of the sidewalk and people walked by like it wasn't even there. Like they couldn't even *see* it. But they still moved aside all the same. As if suddenly there was a large blank spot that they decided to just avoid. To walk around. It was eerie, seeing it.

It sat there and watched with its dark beady eyes, waiting.

Noah didn't know what it was waiting for.

Five meters to home.

Screw appearances, he was getting to safety. Noah sprinted the rest of the way home, almost let his keys fall with the way his hands were shaking. He fumbled with them for a few precious seconds as beads of sweat started to roll down his temple. The resounding click of the door unlocking was like a breath of fresh air as it swung open. Noah stepped inside and quickly slammed the door behind him.

He took a deep breath and tried to stop his heart from beating out of his chest.

Cautiously, Noah took a few steps to the window and peered around the curtains, curious. He swore and quickly whirled around, his back hitting the wall with a sharp bang. Wincing in slight pain, Noah, tried to take another look outside. The light flickers but he takes no notice.

It was there.

It was in front of the house. Staring, seeing, waiting.

It got harder to breathe as Noah tried to take in large gulps of air in his panic. Shit shit shit shit *shit*. What do I do?! What do I *do*!?

The gun in his nightstand came to mind. The one in his living room quickly followed. That one would do.

The light bulb hums and flickers again. Growing brighter. And that is when he sees it. There is something strange on the far wall. It looks almost like a spot of black mold. Only it is throbbing ever so slightly, and, slowly but surely...

Spreading.

Before he could take another step, however, the world around him seemed to tilt and twist and swirl. Dark sludge started to bleed in from the corners of the room. The air grew thin and harsh and Noah struggled to take in a lungful of air properly. What seemed like ashes started fluttering all around him, dead petals flapping uselessly in the air in search of purchase. Colours take on a smudged, dirty quality and the light that had been previously seeping in through the blinds was blown out like a lone candle in the wind, throwing everything into darkness.

Thunder rolled in the distance and it made Noah shiver. The dim and unnatural blue glow of the room made the shadows seem larger and the dark sludge that had been previously climbing out of the walls seems to have collapsed and settled onto his living room. The walls, the floors, the ceiling, the furniture. Everything was now coated in these odd vine-like shadows.

It had volume and... it seemed to be *moving*.

Noah cautiously approached a thick curling vine next to the hall

entrance. Steps careful and breath imitating smoke, curling up into the air, from the cold temperature.

He took in a shallow, shuddering breath and inched closer. He could see his breath fogging his view of the shadowy vine, the cold seeping in through his thin shirt and coiling under his skin in an icy embrace.

His heart was beating so loudly he could hear it thundering in his ears as he moved forward, a dissonance of drum beats with his slow steps.

He paused when he was face to face with it. He stared. It wasn't doing anything. It just... *was*.

Just as he was turning around to see if he could still find his gun in all of this mess, movement caught the corner of his eye.

Noah froze.

It seemed to shift.

He inhaled sharply, fingers twitching against his palms. His eyes stayed glued on the vine.

It pulsed. And it *glowed*.

It was... it was *alive*, Noah realized somewhat dazedly.

He felt his heart seize up as the dark shadow jerked spasmodically, raising slightly from where it was resting against the wall.

Noah stopped breathing. He knew he was staring wide eyed at the apparently living thing that had taken over his living room. He knew that whatever those things were, they were just outside, watching, seeing, waiting. Waiting to rip him to pieces probably. To kill him. Or to make him one of them. Could that be possible? Noah didn't know.

He had to move. He had to defend himself. He had to... do *something*. *Anything*. But the vine was just so mesmerizing. Its glow. So beautiful. So *hypnotic*. Noah couldn't look away. He *wouldn't*. The glow was *everything*. He couldn't ignore it. He couldn't. He just *couldn't*.

So he just stood there.

And watched.

And watched.

And watched.

And watched.

When they came for him, he was still standing. Watching. And so he watched.

And watched.

And watched.

And watched.

When they came for him, he didn't even scream. He just watched.

And watched.

And watched.

And watched.

2. The Alternatives of Tomorrow

Notes for the Chapter:

This is just an alternative ending to the previous chapter.

Before he could take another step, however, the world around him seemed to tilt and twist and swirl. Dark sludge started to bleed in from the corners of the room. The air grew thin and harsh and Noah struggled to take in a lungful of air properly. What seemed like ashes started fluttering all around him, dead petals flapping uselessly in the air in search of purchase. Colours take on a smudged, dirty quality and the light that had been previously seeping in through the blinds was blown out like a lone candle in the wind, throwing everything into darkness.

Thunder rolled in the distance and it made Noah shiver. The dim and unnatural blue glow of the room made the shadows seem larger and the dark sludge that had been previously climbing out of the walls seems to have collapsed and settled onto his living room. The walls, the floors, the ceiling, the furniture. Everything was now coated in these odd vine-like shadows.

It had volume and... it seemed to be *moving*.

Noah cautiously approached a thick curling vine next to the hall entrance. Steps careful and breath imitating smoke, curling up into the air, from the cold temperature.

He took in a shallow, shuddering breath and inched closer. He could see his breath fogging his view of the shadowy vine, the cold seeping in through his thin shirt and coiling under his skin in an icy embrace.

His heart was beating so loudly he could hear it thundering in his ears as he moved forward, a dissonance of drum beats with his slow steps.

He paused when he was face to face with it. He stared. It wasn't doing anything. It just... *was*.

Just as he was turning around to see if he could still find his gun in all of this mess, movement caught the corner of his eye.

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He inhaled sharply, fingers twitching against his palms. His eyes stayed glued on the vine.

It pulsed. And it *glowed*.

It was... it was *alive*, Noah realized somewhat dazedly.

He felt his heart seize up as the dark shadow jerked spasmodically, raising slightly from where it was resting against the wall.

Noah stopped breathing. He knew he was staring wide eyed at the apparently living thing that had taken over his living room. He knew that whatever those things were, they were just outside, watching, seeing, waiting. Waiting to rip him to pieces probably. To kill him. Or to make him one of them. Could that be possible? Noah didn't know.

Suddenly, he heard it. The whispers. The voices. They spoke in union and their words reverberated around Noah's skull.

It was *them*. It was the dogs. The monsters. Whatever they were. He didn't know how he knew, but he *did*. He *knew*. He knew it was them. He knew it in the hollows of his bones. He *did*.

They spoke to him in soft compelling voices. They were... they were telling him... They were telling him to do things. Awful things. Horrible things. *Frightening* things.

Noah was scared. He was scared and stuck to his spot as if petrified. He didn't know what to do. He didn't... he didn't know. He didn't want to do it. Do the things they were telling him to do. He didn't. *He didn't!*

His breath hitched and he started gasping. He just wanted things to go back to normal. He wanted this to be over. *He just wanted it over.* Oh, god. *Please!*

He wheezed and cried and whimpered.

The voices kept talking to him, a constant buzz at the back of his mind. They were... comforting him. Soothing him. They told him. They told him all would be over if he listened. All would be over if he just *listened*.

And so, he did.

He had to, he thought hysterically. He *had* to. He didn't want to do it. He didn't. But he didn't want to leave the glow behind. He *couldn't*. Not again. *Never* again.

There was no other way. There was no off button. No way to turn off this madness that consumed him. That took and took and *took*. Bit by bit, piece by piece. Stripping Noah of himself, of who he was. He could feel himself slipping further and further into the darkness that surrounded him. Coming closer and closer with every breath. And through the haze he thought. Who was he?

Who was he?

Who was he?

Who was *Noah*?

He listened to the voices, to their sugary decadent tenor. To the whispers that promised violence and death in his name. To the caress of black tendrils on his cheek and the dark gentle coos of something he could not see.

He listened.

Felt the abyss swallow him.

And let himself fall.

3. Upside Down 3: Revenge of the Mind-Flayer

Notes for the Chapter:

The point of this chapter was to write only dialogue. It's between Dustin, Mike, Lucas and Will. Have fun guessing who is saying what. ^.^

This is my first time writing dialogue, outside of school assignments and whatever, so I apologize if it's not that good. I tried.

I'm not sure about trying to actually write a story around this or to leave it as it is.

The title of the chapter was inspired by Star Wars.

“Hey, hey, did you hear?”

“What?”

“About the guy on Dearborn Street. The one who lives in that blue house.”

“The one with the orange tree on the front yard?”

“Yeah, yeah! That one! Did you hear?”

“I repeat. What?”

“Ugh. The guy who fucking turned the other way and sprinted the other way when Marie B.’s dog from down the street started barking? With the curly hair and-”

“Oh, yeah. Yeah, I know who you’re talking about. The one by Dearborn Street, right?”

“Yeeah, apparently he-”

“Are you talking about the guy who killed himself?”

“Yea-No-Wait, what?”

“What?! He killed himself?”

“Yeah, it was brutal. They found him in his living room or something. Just... dead.”

“Okay, first of all, how the hell do you even know that?!”

“My dad is friends with one of the cops.”

“... Of course, he is. Why wouldn't he- Look, doesn't matter. The point is, he didn't kill himself, okay?”

“That's what they're saying.”

“He *didn't*! I'm telling you!”

“I think he's right. He looked like he was mauled or something.”

“Okay, and how do *you* know that?”

“Mrs. Weatherby lives across the street from the guy and she told my mom.”

“Huh.”

“So, so.”

“So *what*?”

“So... what do you think happened?”

“To the guy or-”

“No, to your mom's face. *Of course*, to the *guy*, you dumb-”

“Jacob Hale from Millie's class said it's not really him that got mauled. Says it was all a cover up. They used some poor guy that looked like him to make it look like he died.”

“Jacob Hale from Millie's class is a moron who ate *glue* last year on a *dare*.”

“.... Point.”

“Guys! Could we get back to the fact that he was fucking *mauled*!”

“Language.”

“Oh, suck my d-”

“A dog?”

“What?”

“A dog. Maybe he was mauled by a dog.”

“A dog wouldn’t do *that*, dipshit.”

“I don’t know! A coyote, a wolf, a *fucking tiger*! Do I look like a mauling expert to you?!”

“You-“

“Wait wait wait *wait*. What’s your endgame here, Dustin?”

“What? What are you talking about? What did I do?”

“Why did you start talking about this?”

“Yeah, actually that came out of nowhere, man.”

“I just thought that it was a good contribution to our discussion and-”

“We were talking about *Dungeons and Dragons*!”

“And now we’re talking about possible monsters mauling the neighbourhood. Keep up, Mike.”

“You want to find the thing that killed him, don’t you?”

“We’ve decided that he was killed by a *thing*, now?”

“*Monster*. Dungeons and Dragons style. You’re being a bit slow on the update today, Mike.”

“Dustin! *Focus*! You want us to find it, don’t you? That’s why you brought it up.”

“What? Noooo... But now that you mention it-”

“What the hell, man?!”

“What? It could be a very significant scientific discovery, you can’t just-”

“Are you crazy?!”

“It’s a curiosity door! You can’t just close the curiosity door!”

“*Bullshit!*”

“What. What. Did you think that we’d, what, just go on to our *deaths* without any reservations?! How’d we even do this?!”

“We just, like, wait until our parents are asleep and meet up at the hollow tree down the corner where he lives. Lived. *Whatever*. And just, you know, go inside.”

“And just go in-Are you *listening* to yourself?!”

“We can sneak in-”

“Yeah, *no*.”

“There’s nothing we can do, so just let it go, man.”

“Well... that’s not entirely true.”

“What?”

“I mean if we prepare and bring ammo-”

“You want to bring a *gun*-”

“No-What? *No!* My mom doesn’t have a gun, anyway. No, I meant Lucas’ wrist rocket.”

“Oh yeah, because a wrist rocket will be *real* effective against whatever mauled a *grown man!*”

“Not just a wrist rocket. Jesus, let a guy finish will you? We’ll buy some raw meat-”

“What?”

“And we’ll use it as bait-”

“Fucking *what?*”

“And then Steve will use his bat-”

“Steve? You’re bringing *Steve* into this?”

“To bring it down so we can capture it. Easy.”

“I repeat. *What?!?*”

“It’ll work. Trust me. I’ve done this before-”

“*You’ve done this before?!?*”

“Well, okay, not, not *this* exactly, although yes, yes I did, but, you know, also with Meows when he ran away and then when-”

“Your mom’s dead cat is *not* the same as... *whatever* this is.”

“Demodog.”

“What?”

“It’s a Demodog. Or at least it looks like it.”

“It’s *not* a Demodog!”

“It might be!”

“Guys...”

“You didn’t even *see* anything!”

“Doesn’t mean it can’t be a Demodog! People getting mauled in Hawkins? How many times do you think *that* happens?!”

“*It isn’t!* The gate is closed! El closed it!”

“It was closed last time too. We still had ‘*Upside Down 2: The Attack of*

the Demodogs' to contend with!"

"That was *different!*"

"Look, all I'm saying is that we can't just throw out a possibility just because you don't want to believe in it."

"And *I* don't want to start thinking that the Upside Down is back again just because you miss Dart or something stupid like that!"

"Okay, first of all, hurtful. Second, I am a *scientist* and we do not, I reiterate, we do *not* discard a theory just because it might hurt your precious *feelings*, Mike."

"You-"

"Will you *both* shut up and get a move on?!"

"Fucking *fine*, Demodog, whatever. Point is, we can't just go in. It'll just go after us and trap us in the house. *And then eat us!*"

"I mean, we can distract it. There's... four of us. Five if we count Steve. Six if we count Jonathan-"

"Jonathan?"

"Yeah, I mean, if Will's coming then Jonathan is definitely coming with."

"I'm telling Max."

"Yeah, she'll give us *hell* if we don't tell her about this."

"Her brother should come too, then."

"Step-brother. And *why*? He's an asshole."

"Because she's his *sister*? And Steve is coming too and they're friends so..."

"They are *not* friends! They're... friendly-*ish*..."

"Dude, they're friends, get over it."

“Billy’s a jerk! I’m just trying to protect Steve!”

“I don’t think Steve needs your protection.”

“He almost killed him!”

“We know, we were there.”

“And then they just started meeting up and-”

“And Steve *definitely* doesn’t need your protection. You wouldn’t stand two seconds against Hargrove.”

“And now they’re all *friendly* and shit and-”

“Dustin, *shut up*.”

“Steve has a heart too fucking big, that’s what it is. If it was me, I would-”

“*Still!* Still a good guy to have if we have to fight against Demodogs, Dustin.”

“Never thought I’d ever hear the words ‘good guy’ and ‘Billy Hargrove’ in the same sentence.”

“Son of a bitch. Fine! *Fine!* We can use him as bait, if it come down to it.”

“*Dustin!*”

“What’s your *point?*”

“What?”

“You started counting us-”

“Oh, yeah, yeah, right. Uh, we’re, uh... seven? Eight if we count Max’s asshole brother-”

“Nancy will want to come too if Jonathan’s coming.”

“*Fine*, fine. Nine, then.”

“Should we tell El?”

“If we do, we’ll have to tell Hopper.”

“Why can’t we tell Hopper again?”

“Because he’ll just stop us from doing anything and will solve it all on his own!”

“And that’s bad *because*....?”

“Shut up, Lucas. No one asked for your opinion.”

“He probably already knows though? I mean, he *is* a police officer. And Hawkins isn’t all that big, anyway.”

“Yeah, but he doesn’t know that *we* know.”

“But if we tell everyone else, Hopper will probably find out eventually.”

“Son of a bitch, I didn’t think about that.”

“We’re getting off topic. What’s your plan?”

“What? Uh, right. Uh, since we’re... whatever, we can just distract it and get in.”

“...”

“So... wait... you mean like, if we get its attention-”

“Maybe draw it away from the house-”

“Clear a path-”

“Yeah, and then we all die!”

“Well, that’s one point of view.”

“That’s not a point of view. That’s a *fact*.”

“You sound like Steve.”

“So, the junkyard is a good mile or two from the house. If we can draw it in-”

“And use the meat to draw a trail-”

“Use the train tracks to make a path-”

“And then when it gets to the junkyard-”

“We set it on fire-”

“Okay, yeah- that’s a *no*.”

“And if there’s more than just one-”

“It’ll attract them. They’ll all come to stop us-”

“We’ll circle back around out of the junkyard-”

“And by the time they realize that we’re gone-”

“The rest of us will be at the house.”

“Guys! Hey! *HEY!*”

“What?”

“*This*. This is not happening.”

“But-”

“No. *No*.”

“If you’d just-”

“No! We are not risking our fucking necks so that you can feel like a stupid fucking hero or something. Understood? We tell Hopper and we’re definitely not involving El in whatever is happening.”

“...”

“I need a yes!”

“Yeah, yeah. *Fine!* Asshole...”

“...”

“But I mean-”

“No! Lucas, back me up here.”

“Uh, actually-”

“Oh my god. Are you serious?! *Oh my god.*”

“Come on, man. Don’t shut the curiosity door.”

“No! We are *not* going to break into some dead guy’s house and get ourselves killed!”

-

“I hate you all.”

“Love you too, buddy. Now put on the fucking bandana, we have no knowledge about the possible harmful and oppressive atmosphere we might go up against inside.”

“... It’s a house-”

“Just put on the fucking bandana, Mike.”

“*Fucking fine!* Asshole...”

“I heard that.”

“...”

“I saw that too!”

“We’re going to die. We are *all* going to die.”

“Well, on the bright side, it was good while it lasted.”

“That... that does not make me feel better...”

“At least I didn’t say how we’re probably all going to die horrible and excruciating deaths.”

“... You really suck at this.”

“Heh. Steve said he’d meet us near the corner, so let’s go!”

“If a Demodog comes after us, I’m tripping you! Just so you know!”

Author's Note:

Thanks for reading and if you think there's anything I should change or add, drop down a comment. ^^